

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACP APPLICATION

(Current as of: 20 Oct 2015)



U.S. AIR FORCE

100% and then some!

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Special Operations TACP Assessment

1. **INTRODUCTION.**

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Special Operations TACP. This document outlines the application procedures to become a Special Operations TACP. The Special Tactics forces that a Special Operations TACP teams with are organized under the 24th Special Operations Wing (SOW) of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) and assigned to the 17th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 26th Special Tactics Squadron (STS). Applicants familiar with earlier versions of this package should review this document thoroughly, as it has undergone significant revision.

2. **SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACP ELIGIBILITY.**

Special Operations TACPs require high levels of physical fitness, mental agility, professionalism, leadership, interpersonal skills, initiative, psychological stability, motivation, and technical competency. Additional eligibility criteria are listed below:

- ☐ Male (per DOD policy)
- ☐ Security clearance: Secret (minimum), Top Secret (attainable)
- ☐ Volunteer for Hazardous Duty: Static-line Parachute
- ☐ Background: Outstanding resume and no negative personal or professional history
- ☐ Medical/Physical: IFC III Flying Physical authorizing ground based controller, static-line training, and static-line duties documented on a DD Form 2808
- ☐ Physical Fitness: At a minimum, candidates must satisfactorily complete the minimum scores on the PT Evaluation.
- ☐ Must have SEI 914
- ☐ Must be financially stable
- ☐ Guard Applicants must meet eligibility requirements to join Active duty
- ☐ Grey team applicants must have completed Army Ranger School

3. **SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACP APPLICATION PROCEDURES.**

Special Operations TACP assessments are conducted twice each year. Each cycle has two phases: Phase I and Phase II. In Phase I, a panel of enlisted reviews and stratifies applications submitted by the deadline. The top applicants are invited to attend Phase II Selection. Phase II consists of a one-week evaluation conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL, approximately 30 days after Phase I. Candidates must attend Phase II in TDY status. AFSOC will normally fund Phase II attendance for candidates.

Upon completion of Phase II evaluated events, the 720 Special Tactics Group (STG) Commander makes his selection of new Special Operations TACPs. Applicants will be briefed on their select/non-select status upon completing Phase II. Normally, Phase II assessments will occur in February and September. An invitation to Phase II means the Phase I selection board would like to take a closer look at your potential to become an AFSOC TACP. Your decision to attend is voluntary and non-binding. Selection at Phase II means the selection board president has approved your entry into the career field and pipeline training. It is ultimately up to you to accept the challenge.

Active Duty USAF: The Special Operations TACP position is open to the grades of E-4 through E-5 and occasionally E-6. CONUS candidates must have at least 3 years of Time on Station (TOS) and OCONUS candidates must be within 1 year of their DEROS prior to attending

assessment and selection.

It is highly recommended that candidates are:

- 1) JTAC experts (this includes all means of fire support, not just CAS.)
- 2) Extremely fit (meeting the minimums is not extremely fit)
- 3) Expert Marksmen (combat, not AFQC)
- 4) At least, combat lifesavers (candidates should be familiar with performing IVs)
- 5) Proficient in combatives (with and without kit)
- 6) Ranger qualified

****The above items are only recommendations, not prerequisites.**

First-Time Non-Selects: Candidates who attend Phase II, but are not selected, are not guaranteed a Phase II invitation in future selection cycles. If the cadre identifies deficiencies/weaknesses that they would like to see corrected before accepting you into the Special Tactics community, you must submit an updated application that addresses those deficiencies. You may elect to use the same recommendation letters, but all other information should be updated appropriately and you must accomplish a new PT test.

4. **PHASE I**

Phase I applications are due by the date posted on the message accompanying the application package. The Assessment Director does an initial review of the applications for completeness. The Assessment Director convenes a review board consisting of the AFSOC FAM, 17th Special Tactics Chief Enlisted Manager, and other Special Operations TACPs. The board ranks the applications, identifying the candidates most likely to succeed. Once invitations are sent, the Assessment Director contacts the individuals with Phase II reporting instructions.

The Assessment Director designates the candidate team leader. At that time, the team is encouraged to begin team building via email and other means. The more cohesive the team is prior to arrival, the better the team interaction will be during Phase II, enhancing everyone's chances to be selected. The team leader is the primary means of contacting the Assessment Director for assessment-related matters. The Assessment Director is your definitive resource for all policy, continuity, and information on Phase II.

All non-invited applicants will receive feedback on their applications from the Assessment Director. If you do not hear from the Assessment Director within 45 days of submitting your application, contact him for details.

Note: Guard applicants must annotate on the cover page of their Phase I application that they meet eligibility requirements. This includes identifying and securing eligibility for all waivers necessary to transition to active duty. Annotation on the Phase I package indicates to the reviewing authority that you have met all requirements.

Read through ANNEX A for complete instructions on constructing your Phase I package.

5. **PHASE II**

Phase II Selection is conducted at Hurlburt Field, FL. The purpose of Phase II is to assess

each candidate in the nine STS attributes: Physical Fitness, Mental Agility, Professionalism, Leadership, Interpersonal Skills, Initiative, Psychological Stability, Motivation, and Technical Competency for the purpose of determining if you have the raw skills to operate in the Special Operations environment. Your performance will be evaluated as a team member and as an individual. The schedule is designed to stress you. The Special Operations TACP cadre will observe and take notes on everything you do. These observations will be the basis for a hiring recommendation made to the 720th STG Commander. The data will also be used to provide critical feedback to enhance your personal and professional growth.

Candidates must be prepared for a physically and mentally demanding week. You cannot trust your judgment of your physical and mental preparedness prior to coming to Phase II. Feedback from most candidates indicates that this week is more demanding than anything they anticipated. The cadre will push you physically and mentally beyond your comfort zone to assess those critical attributes in adverse situations. You will be expected to perform to the best of your ability in all events.

Billeting will be coordinated for all candidates. Candidates will be billeted together for the duration of Phase II. The candidate team leader is responsible for passing travel and contact information for all candidates. When the candidate team leader arrives, he must check in with the Assessment Director for further instructions.

There are five ways to be dismissed during Phase II. Failure to pass the PT Evaluation during Phase II is grounds for immediate dismissal. Medical disqualification results from a medical assessment to determine your ability to safely continue Phase II. Self-Initiated Elimination (SIE) means that you no longer wish to continue in the assessment. Quitting by Action (QBA) is a Phase II policy that allows the Phase II cadre to give you three consecutive warnings during an assessment event, for demonstrating lack of motivation to continue or perform at the required level of effort. If a fourth warning is issued, you are subject to removal from the assessment. If a candidate SIE's or QBA's, he will not be considered again for assessment. Finally, the Phase II cadre retains the ability to remove a candidate at any time for not performing to standards.

Candidates should be prepared for the following:

- ☐ Extensive psychological testing and interviews
- ☐ Briefing and writing skills evaluations
- ☐ Problem solving events
- ☐ Leadership ability evaluations
- ☐ Ruckmarch with 55-70 lbs of weight at distances up to 12 miles
- ☐ Running for distances up to 5 miles at a time
- ☐ Calisthenics sessions of various exercises
- ☐ Water confidence evaluations, to include:
 - Combat Water Survival Test

Those candidates who successfully complete Phase II and are selected can expect to receive an assignment at Ft Benning, GA, Hunter Army Airfield, GA, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA, Pope AFB, NC, Hurlburt Field, FL, or Cannon AFB, NM. The location will be dictated by the AFSOC TACP FAM based upon operational necessity. Applicants should be prepared to receive an assignment to any of the above locations and your order of assignment preference is not a

consideration for the board.

Guard selectees must contact an active duty recruiter and begin the process to transition through guard accessions onto active duty. Once the TACP CFM has provided a slot for the guard selectee, AFPC will generate a “place holder” assignment until the AFSOC FAM designates a Special Tactics Squadron for the individual to be assigned to based on mission requirements. Guard selectees can expect to lose one rank when they transition to active duty. Guard applicants must be between the rank of SrA and MSgt when they submit their application to attend the AFSOC TACP selection. There is no age restriction on guard applicants.

Grey team candidates will be assessed as any other candidate with the following additional focused areas:

- ☐ Small team dynamics
- ☐ Independent operations
- ☐ Operating in ambiguous environment/operations other than war
- ☐ Unconventional problem solving

The 17th STS will be responsible for providing cadre support to evaluate candidates for Gray team.

ANNEX A

Phase I Application Instructions & Example

PHASE I APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proof read your application for accuracy, format, grammar, and spelling. In Phase I, the selection board relies solely on information and impressions made through your application. Incomplete or poorly crafted applications are a reflection of the applicant's professionalism. As a general rule, successful Phase I applications are concise, easy to understand, and are not filled with extra "fluff." Your success in the Special Tactics community begins with this application.

The application will include the following in this order:

1. Cover page – Use Times New Roman and Font size 10
2. Personal Narrative – One page in length (See example for format and specifics)
3. Copy of your personal SURF (Single Unit Retrieval Format) accessible via the AMS (Assignment Management System) webpage.
4. One signed recommendation letter from your commander, and squadron superintendent no more than one-page in length. The letter should comment on demonstrated leadership ability, job performance and teamwork including relevant examples.
5. Copies of your three most recent performance reports.
6. All copies of your Form 8s/3827s./CAS log
7. Copy of a DD Form 2808 (obtained at base medical unit) dated within 60-days of application submission authorizing ground based controller, static-line training, and static-line duties.

Access formal application process by clicking the AFSOC TACP Application link under the AFSOC TACP Opportunities banner at

<http://www.24sow.af.mil/Units/TacticalAirControlParty.aspx> When complete, your application should be scanned into a PDF file as ONE DOCUMENT and emailed to 24SOW.RAS.org@us.af.mil. Put your last name and "TACP Application" in the subject line of the email, such as "Johnson-TACP Application".

Additional Notes:

- The format on the next few pages is not an option. Follow the example. Do not include the footer you see below that says: "Current as of DATE".
- If the header or section does not apply to your situation, simply delete that section.
- Be sure that all signature blocks are hand signed with wet ink.

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACP COVER PAGE**DATE:** 20 July 2015**Name/Rank:** SSgt John B. Doe**SSN:** 123-45-6789**Work Address:** 123 Main Street, Hurlburt Field, FL 32544**Work Email:** john.doe@hurlburt.af.mil**Work Phone:** 850-555-1234**Current Duty Station:** Hurlburt Field, FL**Current Unit:** 1st Special Operations Squadron**AFSC/Current Position:** Battalion JTAC**Marital Status:** Married**INSERT YOUR PHOTO HERE.**

The photo will be a forward facing portrait. You will be in service dress and the photo should extend from the bottom of your name tag/bottom of your ribbon rack to the top of your head. Use your base official photo lab for best results.

Attended Phase II: Yes / No **If yes, when:** (Month, Year): **(ANG only) Active duty eligible:** Yes/No**Commander Name/Rank:** Major John Smith**Email/Phone:** john.smith@hurlburt.af.mil / 850-678-1234**Functional Manager Name/Rank:** SMSgt Mike Johnson**Email/Phone:** michael.johnson@hurlburt.af.mil / 850-789-3456**PT Test Results****PT Test Date:****Pull-ups**____**Sit-ups**____**Push-ups**____**3 Mile run**____**mins**____**secs****Combat Water Survival Test (Pass / Fail)****12 Mile Ruck March**____**hours**____**mins**____**secs****Administrator Name/Rank:****Email/Phone:****Administrator Signature**_____

Candidate acknowledgment statement: "I, (Insert Name Here), hereby apply to become a Special Operations TACP and volunteer to perform the hazardous duties inherent to Special Tactics. I acknowledge that I can be removed from further assessment for any of the following reasons: 1) quitting through words or actions, 2) becoming a medical or safety risk, 3) committing an integrity violation such as lying, cheating, or stealing, or 4) failing to meet specified standards.

Candidate Signature:_____ **Date:**_____

20 Jul 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACP SELECTION BOARD

FROM: 16EMS/MXMG

SUBJECT: Personal Narrative

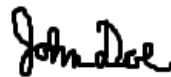
1. This document is provided to give the selection board an overall understanding of your character and personality. It should be clear, concise, and free of extra “fluff” statements.

It should include:

1. Your personal background, such as where you grew up, significant jobs/positions held, and/or an explanation of your experiences and involvements before and during military service
2. An identification and explanation of your perceived strengths and weaknesses
3. A discussion on what attracts you to become a Special Operations TACP
4. Why Special Operations TACP is the right career for you

2. The narrative will be formatted with 1 inch margins on the left and right sides. The top margin will be between 1 inch and 1.5 inches depending on the heading you establish. The bottom will be 1 inch.

3. The heading format you see above should be followed with your own information entered in the FROM portion. The document may not exceed more than one page in length. Use Times New Roman with font size 12. Include a crest in the upper left hand corner of your header similar to an official memorandum for record. See AFH 33-337 *The Tongue and Quill* or sister service equivalent for examples of an Official Memorandum for Record.



JOHN A. DOE, SSgt, USAF Logistics
2-27 Bn JTAC

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

DATE

MEMORANDUM FOR SPECIAL TACTICS TACP SELECTION BOARD

FROM: X ASOS/CC

XXX. Whatever St

Ft Xxxxx AIN, ST XXXXX

SUBJECT: Special Operations TACP Recommendation Letter (EXAMPLE)

1. SSgt John A. Doe is my number one recommendation for a Special Operations TACP position. SSgt Doe possesses an exceptionally strong duty concept, as evidenced by the motivated and professional way he addresses his daily work, as evidenced by his recent selection as PACAF NCO of the Year. His service conducting JTAC duties for one of our Army battalions has been - and continues to be - impeccable. I've personally called upon him to instruct me on various TACP skills and physical training concepts. His decision making ability and clear judgment underscore his unselfish sense of duty. SSgt Doe is highly dedicated to his work as a Joint Terminal Attack Controller and he exercises every opportunity to better himself and expand his knowledge both on and off duty.
2. SSgt Doe's physical and personal skills, his adaptability and willingness to learn all attribute to his superb ability as a team player. He will be a valued asset to the Special Tactics community. I am confident in my decision for his recommendation. If you have any questions you may contact me at DSN: XXX-XXXX or by email at:
3. To be blunt, SSgt Doe succeeds magnificently at everything he undertakes. He is a sincere, articulate young NCO who is made of just the right decisive "stuff" we're looking for in our leaders. I am confident he would make an excellent Special Operations TACP and recommend his selection on your next board.

JOHN B. HANCOCK, Lt Col, USAF
Commander

NOTE: Letter of Recommendation will be formatted according to AFH 33-337 *The Tongue and Quill*

ANNEX B

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TACP PT EVALUATION STANDARDS

General. Special Operations TACP applicants shall complete the physical training test in accordance with these procedures as part of the Special Operations TACP application.

Standards. You must complete the minimum number of exercises, run, and swim within the times specified below. Special Operations TACP selection is extremely competitive; you should give your very best effort, which should be well beyond the minimums. Your PT Evaluation should have been accomplished within three months of the Phase I due date and as close to Phase I as possible to reflect your current level of fitness.

CALISTHENICS: pull-ups, sit-ups, and push-ups -- exercise to time limit or until muscle failure

☐ Minimums:

- 8 pull-ups in 1 minute
- 60 sit-ups in 2 minutes
- 45 push-ups in 2 minutes

RUN: 3 miles non-stop

☐ Minimums:

- 3 miles completed within 24 minutes (24:00)

CWST: Combat Water Survival Test

☐ Minimums:

1. Swim 15 meters: Swim 15 meters with rifle, wearing MCU/ABU, boots, and Load Carrying Equipment (LCE) without loss of rifle and equipment.
2. 3 Meter Drop: Walk blindfolded off a 3-meter diving board with rifle and LCE. After entering the water, remove blindfold and swim to poolside without loss of rifle or equipment.
3. Equipment Removal: starting at poolside, enter the water and immediately submerge, discard rifle and remove LCE prior to surfacing and swim to poolside. You cannot be touching any of your equipment when you surface.

NOTE: All swim events must be accomplished without showing fear.

NOTE: During A&S at Hurlburt Field, FL, in place of the blindfolded 3 meter drop, TACP A&S combined and slightly modifies the last two events.

Stand poolside facing away from water, blindfolded, and wearing prescribed equipment. Candidate is pushed into water by cadre and will doff his equipment submerged, surface and swim to poolside, not touching any of his equipment.

RUCKMARCH: 12 miles non-stop

□ **Minimums:**

12 miles completed within 3 hours (3:00:00)

Does not have to occur on same day as other PT events, but within 7 days

Administration. The PT test must be given in the order listed and completed within a three-hour timeframe. If you are unable to meet any of the minimums, you have failed the test. The PT test should be administered by your supervisor. Other test administrators will be considered on a case-by-case basis, following coordination with the Assessment Director. If you fail to execute the proper form, the test administrator will correct you, and the incorrect repetition will not be counted. The test administrator will document the results on the cover sheet of your application and sign the appropriate space. Each candidate and administrator should watch the instructional video posted at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zdKD0VMKWg&feature=plcp&context=C3f31946UDOEgsToPDskJY7F3h01Zie>

0ZF9II5EP11. The video should be used as a guide for exercise form ONLY, the repetition and time standards referenced do not apply to Special Operations TACP candidates.

Procedures. Calisthenics events will be tested one right after the other with approximately a 2-minute time lapse between events. Upon completion of all the calisthenics events, a 10-minute rest period is given prior to starting the 3-mile run. Upon completion of the 3-mile run, a 20-minute rest period is given prior to starting the CWST.

- **Pull-ups (one minute time limit).** This exercise is executed on a pull-up bar. The individual grasps the bar with the hands about shoulder width apart. Hands can be facing toward the candidate (chin up) or away from the candidate (pull up). This is a two-count exercise. The exercise begins in the “dead hang” position. Count one: pull the body directly upward until the chin is over the bar. Count two: lower the body until the body is again in the “dead hang” position. Repeat as many times as possible. Individuals will not swing excessively or bicycle feet as the chin is pulled over the bar. Legs are allowed to bend, but must not be kicked or manipulated to aid upward movement. If the candidate falls off or releases the bar, the exercise is terminated. Designed to measure strength and endurance in the back, triceps, and biceps muscles used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.
- **Sit-ups (two minute time limit).** Starting position: back flat on the ground, hands behind the head, fingers interlocked, head off the ground and knees bent at approximately a 90 degree angle. Another individual during the exercise holds the feet (optional). This is a two-count exercise. Count one: sit up until the back is vertical, breaking a 90 degree plane with the ground. Count two: return to the starting position. There is no authorized rest position during this exercise. If the candidate rests, the exercise is terminated. If an individual raises buttocks from ground, removes hands from behind the head during a repetition, or the fingers are not interlocked, the repetition is not counted. Designed to measure strength and endurance in abdominal and hip flexor muscle groups used when performing specific mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.
- **Push-ups (two minute time limit).** This exercise starts from the front leaning rest position. The body must be maintained straight from head to heels with knees together. This is a two-count exercise. Count one: flex the elbows, lowering the body until the arm is bent at least 90 degrees at the elbow and the upper arm breaks a parallel plane with the ground. Count two: raise the body until the elbows are straight and locked. Repeat this

exercise as many times as possible. The candidate will not raise his buttocks in the air, sag his middle to the ground, or raise any hand or foot from their starting position. If a hand or foot is raised, the exercise is terminated. The only authorized rest position is the starting position. Designed to measure the strength and endurance of the chest and triceps muscles used when performing mission tasks. A two-minute rest follows this event.

- **Three Mile Run.** Performed with running shoes and running shorts. This run must be continuous (non-stop). If a candidate stops anytime during the run, the test will be stopped and considered a failure for the entire test. The test should be conducted on a measured running track. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations. This event is followed by a 20-minute rest period prior to the CWST.
- **Combat Water Survival Training.** The CWST consists of three stations: 1) Swim 15 meters with rifle, wearing MCU/ABU, boots, and Load Carrying Equipment (LCE) without loss of rifle and equipment. 2) 3 Meter Drop: walk blindfolded off a 3-meter diving board with rifle and LCE. After entering the water, remove blindfold and swim to poolside without loss of rifle or equipment. 3) Equipment Removal: starting at poolside, enter the water and immediately submerge, discard rifle and remove LCE prior to surfacing and swim to poolside. You cannot be touching any of your equipment when you surface.
- **Twelve Mile Ruck March.** Performed in ABU or Multi-cam uniform and field boots. Use a rucksack with a total weight of 55 lbs along with a weapon, LCE and helmet. The ruck march must be completed within 3 hours. The test should be conducted on a measured flat surface with minimal incline/decline of elevation. Designed to measure aerobic endurance used when performing mission tasks, specifically employment or evasion situations. This event does not have to be conducted the same day as the other PT events, but should be conducted within 7-days of the PT event. If selected for Phase II, you will accomplish the PT test and ruck march within 24 hours of each other. Prepare yourself now.